(b) Presently, there are 35 Ministries. In this connection, it may be noted that Ministries/Departments of the Government of India are created under the Government of India (Allocated of Business) Rules, 1961 for the convenient transaction of business of the Government. Depending on the changes in the nature of the Government's business, policies, procedures and priorities, the Ministries/Departments are restructured/abolished/created from time to time. This is an ongoing process and takes into account the changing needs of the Government.

(c) The Ministry of Finance has been monitoring economy exercises on 10% cut in posts initiated in early 1992 based on a decision announced by the then Prime Minister in the National Development Council in December, 1991. According to the information available, so far, about 1.42 lakh posts have been abolished in various Ministries/Departments. The posts so abolished also pertain to phasing out of certain activities due to de-regulation/liberalisation especially in the Department of Industrial Development, Department of Commerce, Department of Supply, etc. The exercise is still continuing.

Special cell to accord sanction for prosecution

257. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since set up a special cell to accord sanction in corruption cases referred to it by C.B.I. and if so, the details thereof and the time stipulated for according sanction in those cases;

(b) what is the number of cases wherein sanctions for prosecution have been accorded since the inception of the special cell; and

(c) what are the details of cases which are still pending with the cell and the reasons in each case for not granting sanction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) No, Sir. The Government has not set up any special cell to accord sanction in corruption cases. However, in accordance with the latest policy guidelines in respect of cases relating to sanction for prosecution under the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 and the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, a time limit of 3 (three) months has been prescribed for taking a view by the Ministries/Departments etc.

(b) and (c) Do not arise, in view of (a) above.

Accord of sanction for prosecution

258. SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH: SHRI PARAG CHALIHA:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are very quick in according sanctions for prosecution of Group B, C and D civilian officers while they sit over the requests of prosecuting agencies to proceed against IAS officers; and

(b) if not, what are the details of IAS and non-IAS officers against whom such sanctions had been sought during 1996-97 till date by different agencies after preliminary/specific probes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) and (b) It is incorrect to say that sanctions for prosecution of Group B, C and D civilian officers are issued quickly and that similar cases against IAS officers are delayed. In terms of para 3.1 of Chapter I of Vigilance Manual, Vol. I, the primiary responsibility for the maintenance of purity, integrity and efficiency in the organisations vests in the Secretary of the administrative Ministry or the head of the Department.